

Ang. Then must your brother die.
Isa. And 'twere the cheaper way:
 Better it were a brother died at once,
 Than that a sister, by redeeming him,
 Should die for euer.

Ang. Were not you then as cruell as the Sentence,
 That you haue slander'd so?

Isa. Ignomic in ranfome, and free pardon
 Are of two houses: lawfull mercie,
 Is nothing kin to fowle redemption.

Ang. You seem'd of late to make the Law a tirant,
 And rather prou'd the sliding of your brother
 A meriment, then a vice.

Isa. Oh pardon me my Lord, it oft fals out
 To haue, what we would haue,
 We speake not what we meane;
 I something do excuse the thing I hate,
 For his aduantage that I dearly loue.

Ang. We are all fraile.

Isa. Else let my brother die,
 If not a fedarie but onely he
 Owe, and succeed thy weaknesse.

Ang. Nay, women are fraile too.

Isa. I, as the glasses where they view themselves,
 Which are as easie broke as they make formes;
 Women? Helpe heauen; men their creation marre
 In profiting by them: Nay, call vs ten times fraile,
 For we are soft, as our complexions are;

And credulous to false prints.

Ang. I thinke it well.

And from this testimonie of your owne sex

(Since I suppose we are made to be no stronger

Then faults may shake our frames) let me be bold;

I do arrest your words. Be that you are;

That is a woman; if you be more, you're none.

If you be one (as you are well exprest

By all externall warrants) shew it now,

By putting on the destin'd Luerie.

Isa. I haue no tongue but one; gentle my Lord,

Let me entreate you speake the former language.

Ang. Plainlie conceiue I loue you.

Isa. My brother did loue *Isabel*,

And you tell me that he shall die for't.

Ang. He shall not *Isabel* if you giue me loue.

Isa. I know your vertue hath a licence in't,

Which seemes a little fouler then it is,

To plucke on others.

Ang. Beleue me on mine Honor,

My words expresse my purpose.

Isa. Ha? Little honor, to be much beleu'd,

And most pernicious purpose: Seeming, seeming.

I will proclaime thee *Angelo*; looke for't.

Signe me a present pardon for my brother,

Or with an out-stretcht throte. He tell the world aloud

What man thou art.

Ang. Who will beleue thee *Isabel*?

My vnsoild name, th'aufterence of my life,

My vouch against you, and my place in State,

Will so your accusation ouer-weigh,

That you shall stifle in your owne report,

And smell of calumnie. I haue begun,

And now I giue my sensuall race, the reine;

Fit thy consent to my sharpe appetite,

Lay by all niceties, and prolixious blushes

That banish what they lucifer: Redeeme thy brother,

By yeelding vp thy bodie to my will,

Or else he must not onely die the death,

But thy vnkindnesse shall his death draw out

To lingring sufferance: Answer me to morrow,

Or by the affection that now guides me most,

He proue a Tirant to him. As for you,

Say what you can; my false, ore-weighs your true.

Isa. To whom should I complaine? Did I tell this,

Who would beleue me? O perillous mouthes

That beare in them, one and the selfesame tongue,

Either of condemnation, or approofe,

Bidding the Law make curtise to their will,

Hooking both right and wrong to th'appetite,

To follow as it drawes. He to my brother,

Though he hath false by prompture of the blood,

Yet hath he in him such a minde of Honor,

That had he twentie heads to tender downe

On twentie bloodie blockes, hee'd yeeld them vp,

Before his sister should her bodie stoop

To such abhord pollution.

Then *Isabel* liue chaste, and brother die;

"More then our Brother, is our Chastitie.

He tell him yet of *Angelo*'s request,

And fit his minde to death, for his foules rest.

Actus Tertius. Scena Prima.

Enter Duke, Claudio, and Pronost.

Du. So then you hope of pardon from Lord *Angelo*?

Cla. The miserable haue no other medicine

But onely hope: I haue hope to liue, and am prepar'd to

die.

Duke. Be absolute for death: either death or life

Shall thereby be the sweeter. Reason thus with life:

If I do loose thee, I do loose a thing

That none but fooles would keepe: a breath thou art,

Seruite to all the skye-influences,

That dost this habitation where thou keepst

Hourelly afflict: Meerely, thou art deaths foole,

For him thou labourst by thy flight to shun,

And yet runst toward him still. Thou art not noble,

For all th'accommodations that thou bearest,

Are nurst by basenesse: Thou'rt by no means valiant,

For thou dost feare the soft and tender forke

Of a poore worme: thy best of rest is sleepe,

And that thou oft prouoakst, yet grosselie fearest

Thy death, which is no more. Thou art not thy selfe,

For thou exists on manie a thousand graines

That issue out of dust. Happie thou art not,

For what thou hast not, still thou striv'st to get,

And what thou hast forgetst: Thou art not certaine,

For thy complexion shifts to strange effects,

After the Moone: If thou art rich, thou'rt poore,

For like an Asse, whose backe with Ingots bowes;

Thou bearest thy heauie riches but a iournie,

And death vnloads thee; Friend hast thou none.

For thine owne bowels which do call thee, fire

The meere effusion of thy proper loines

Do curse the Gowt, Sapego, and the Rheume

For ending thee no sooner. Thou hast nor youth, nor age

But as it were an after-dinners sleepe

Dreaming on both, for all thy blessed youth

Becomes as aged, and doth begge the almes

Of palsied Eld: and when thou art old, and rich

Thou

Thou hast neither heate, affection, limbe, nor beautie

To make thy riches pleasant: what's yet in this

That beares the name of life? Yet in this life

Lie hid more thousand deaths; yet death we feare

That makes these oddes, all euen.

Cla. I humblye thanke you.

To sue to liue, I finde I seeke to die,

And seeking death, finde life: Let it come on.

Enter *Isabella*.

Isa. What hoa? Peace heere; Grace, and good com-

panie.

Pro. Who's there? Come in, the wish deserues a

welcome.

Duke. Deere sir, ere long He visit you againe.

Cla. Most holie Sir, I thanke you.

Isa. My businesse is a word or two with *Claudio*.

Pro. And verie welcom: looke Signior, here's your

sister.

Duke. Prouost, a word with you.

Pro. As manie as you please.

Duke. Bring them to heare me speake, where I may be

conceal'd.

Cla. Now sister, what's the comfort?

Isa. Why,

As all comforts are: most good, most good indeede,

Lord *Angelo* hauing affaires to heauen

Intends you for his swift Ambassador,

Where you shall be an euerslasting Leiger;

Therefore your best appointment make with speed,

To Morrow you set on.

Cla. Is there no remedie?

Isa. None; but such remedie, as to saue a head

To cleaue a heart in twaine:

Cla. But is there anie?

Isa. Yes brother, you may liue;

There is a diuelliish mercie in the Iudge,

If you'll implore it, that will free your life,

But fetter you till death.

Cla. Perpetuall durance?

Isa. I iust, perpetuall durance, a restraint

Through all the worlds vassalitie you had

To a determin'd scope.

Cla. But in what nature?

Isa. In such a one, as you consenting too't,

Would barke your honor from that trunk you beare,

And leaue you naked.

Cla. Let me know the point.

Isa. Oh, I do feare thee *Claudio*, and I quake,

Least thou a feauorous life shouldst entertaine,

And fix or seuen winters more respect

Then a perpetuall Honor. Dar'st thou die?

The sence of death is most in apprehension,

And the poore Beetle that we treade vpon

In corporall sufferance, finds a pang as great,

As when a Giant dies.

Cla. Why giue you me this shame?

Thinke you I can a resolution fetch

From flowrie tendernesse? If I must die,

I will encounter darknesse as a bride,

And hugge it in mine armes.

Isa. There spake my brother: there my fathers graue

Did utter forth a voice. Yes, thou must die:

Thou art too noble, to conserue a life

In base appliances. This outward sainted Deputie,

Whose settled visage, and deliberate word

Nips youth in th'head, and follics doth cinnem

As Falcon doth the Fowle, is yet a diuell:

His filth within being cast, he would appeare

A pond, as deepe as hell.

Cla. The prenzie, *Angelo*?

Isa. Oh 'tis the cunning Luerie of hell,

The damnest bodie to inuest, and couer

In prenzie gardes; dost thou thinke *Claudio*,

If I would yeeld him my virginie

Thou might'st be freed?

Cla. Oh heauens, it cannot be.

Isa. Yes, he would giue thee; from this rank offence

So to offend him still. This night's the time

That I should do what I abhorre to name,

Or else thou diest to morrow.

Cla. Thou shalt not do't.

Isa. O, were it but my life,

I'de throw it downe for your deliuerance

As frankly as a pin.

Cla. Thankes deere *Isabel*.

Isa. Be readie *Claudio*, for your death to morrow.

Cla. Yes, Has he affections in him,

That thus can make him bite the Law by th'nose,

When he would force it? Sure it is no sinne,

Or of the deadly feuen it is the least.

Isa. Which is the least?

Cla. If it were damnable, he being so wise,

Why would he for the momentarie trick

Be perdurable sin'de? Oh *Isabel*!

Isa. What saies my brother?

Cla. Death is a fearefull thing.

Isa. And shamed life, a hatefull.

Cla. I, but to die, and go we know not where,

To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot,

This sensible warme motion, to become

A kneaded clod; And the delighted spirit

To bath in fierie floods, or to recide

In thrilling Region of thicke-ribbed Ice,

To be imprison'd in the viewlesse windes

And blowne with restless violence round about

The pendant world: or to be worfe then worst

Of those, that lawlesse and incertaine thought,

Imagine howling, 'tis too horrible.

The weariest, and most loathed worldly life

That Age, Ache, periury, and imprisonment

Can lay on nature, is a Paradise

To what we feare of death.

Isa. Alas, alas.

Cla. Sweet Sister, let me liue.

What sinne you do, to saue a brothers life,

Nature dispenses with the deede so farre,

That it becomes a vertue.

Isa. Oh you beast,

Oh faithlesse Coward, oh dishonest wretch,

Wilt thou be made a man, out of my vice?

Is't not a kinde of Incest, to take life

From thine owne sisters shame? What should I thinke,

Heauen shield my Mother plaid my Father faire:

For such a warped slip of wildernesse

Nere issu'd from his blood. Take my defiance,

Die, perish: Might but my bending downe

Repreeue thee from thy fate, it should proceede.

He pray a thousand praiers for thy death,

No word to saue thee.

Cla. Nay heare me *Isabel*.

Isa. Oh fie, fie, fie:

Thy sinne's not accidentall, but a Trade;

Mercie